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The Orthodox Herald

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HOLY DAY-MEETING OF OUR LORD

The Church celebrates the Meeting of the Lord forty days after Christmas/the Nativity. This Holy Day is beautifully described in the Gospel reading for the day - Luke 2:22-40. From this reading and from the prayers and hymns for the day we find that three separate incidents occur. The purification of the Mother of God, the redemption of Jesus as her first-born Son and the meeting of Jesus with the aged Simeon and the prophetess Anna at the temple.

According to Mosaic law, a mother who had given birth to a boy was excluded from public worship for forty days. After this time she was expected to go to the temple and make an offering of a lamb, turtle dove or pigeon. The priest then prayed over her restoring her to her former status (Lev. 12:2-8).

Another ordinance of this Law was that the first-born son was considered as belonging to God and had to be bought back by an offering. This is why Jesus was brought to the temple (Exodus 13:2).

In the gospel reading, most emphasis is placed on something which occurred at the temple. When Mary and Joseph brought the child to the temple, there was present St. Simeon an elderly and pious man who had been given a revelation that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah, the Anointed One. When he saw the child, he recognized Him as the Messiah. He took Him in his arms and said the words which are sung at each vesper service: "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the Glory of Your people Israel."

It is recorded that there was another person present at this Meeting, the Prophetess Anna. She was an elderly woman who was noted for her piety.

The Holy Day has been celebrated in the church from Apostolic times. It did

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There is a peace down deep within the Christian,
A rock on which to lean in time of storm,
A lasting peace that will outlive the ages,
in spite of those who ridicule and scorn.



ST. EPHRAIM'S PRAYER

During Great Lent, the prayer written by St. Ephraim is recited in many services of the church. Many people add it to their daily prayers during this period. There are various translations but they all tell us what we have to guard against.

"O Lord and Master of my life, give me not a spirit of idleness, discouragement, lust of power or vain babbling. But rather give me, your servant the spirit of purity, humility, patience and love. Yea, O Lord and King, grant that I may perceive my own faults, and not judge my brother. For blessed are You unto ages of ages. Amen."

We could interpret vain babbling in the prayer to be gossip. Which brings to mind the story of a man with a troubled conscience who went to a monastery for a retreat. While there, he went to a monk for advice. He told him that he had circulated a vile story about a friend, only to find out the story was not true.

"If you want to make peace with your conscience," said the monk, "you must fill a bag with chicken feathers, and go to every doorway in your town, and drop in each one of them one fluffy feather."

Continued on Page 58, Col. 3

TOWARD THE LENTEN JOURNEY

Each year the Pre-Lenten readings invite us to follow Jesus and to remain with Him there in prayer, fasting and almsgiving. This wilderness is not a woods or desert, but rather a period of renewal of heart in preparation for Paska/Easter.

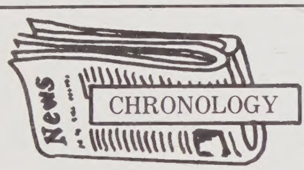
This journey is different from most trips in one important aspect respect: we try to lose the baggage of sin and passions which weigh us down at the beginning of the journey. However, it is not unlike a trip to the woods or desert. Try to imagine such an excursion. When you go, you travel light. Food is sparse and much simpler. We take on the lighter and useful virtues which help us on our way. Therefore, there will be no worldly entertainment. You have a chance to be quiet and to get in touch with yourself and to face God more directly.

The Church began to warn us to get ready for our journey as far back as January 20, when it set the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) to be read. Zacchaeus really wanted to see God and he was willing to overcome ridicule and embarrassment to see Him. The following Sunday we read about the Publican and the Pharisee (Luke 18:10-14). We are reminded that we are all sinners and that we have to freely confess these sins and not justify them. Now that we have acknowledged this the next Sunday, February 3, we are read about the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). He repented of the sins and returned to the teachings of his father. This lesson is followed by that of the Sunday of the Last Judgment (Matt 25:31-46) where we are reminded that although the Father is loving and merciful, He does not save or accept those who do not repent. The last Sunday before Lent is known as Forgiveness Sunday. We read from Matt 6:14-21 which teaches us that if we are to show true repentance and find reconciliation with God we must first show forgiveness with our fellow man.

Lent starts on the day following or at 6

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Died: Fr. Cyril Fotiev, late of Munich, Germany.

Libes of the Pillar of Orthodoxy is about the struggles of Patriarch Photius of Constantinople (820-891), St. Gregory Palamas (1296-1359) and St. Mark, the Metropolitan of Epheus (1392-1444). It includes discussion on the basic and essentially important differences between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. Included in the 640 pages are 125 illustrations plus 4 maps. Order from: Holy Cross Convent, P.O. Box 3118, Buena Vista, Colorado 81211 or phone: (719) 395-8898. Cost $30.00, including postage and handling.

Moscow: New Laws regulating religion in the U.S.S.R. have been passed; however, the Patriarchate of Moscow is now the only Orthodox Church recognized. While the laws regulating religion have been liberalized, it is yet to be seen how they will be implemented and to what extent wrongs will be corrected. The new laws give unprecedented rights to Soviet believers but limited rights to organized parishes and limited rights to religious groups. Religious groups have a shaky legal structure and limited rights.

USED BOOKS ON RELIGION AND ICONS or icon prints are being collected for the Society of St. Nicholas, c/o Methodios Hayes, P.O. Box 7648, Pretori 0001, South Africa to do mission work in South Africa. These items will help explain the Faith to non-Orthodox who have expressed interest in Orthodoxy. You may ship items directly to South Africa and mark the package **Used Religious Materials - No Commercial Value** to avoid custom duties. For donations or more information you may contact in the U.S. Sarah Loft at 212-927-0596.

RADIO LIBERTY is looking for Russian speaking people who have marketing research experience to live in Paris and travel to the Soviet Union to collect data on what the listeners of the station want to hear. Call 202-835-0060 for more info.

THE CHURCH IN SVOBODA in the USSR, which is located near Kursk, was returned to the Russian Orthodox people. The church is located 800 yards from a "holy" spring which has been venerated since 1295. The spring was buried in 1960 by concrete but the water seeped through. Authorities tried many ways to restrict access to the spring but failed. The parish now intends to build a chapel over the spring and a dressing-shed for pilgrims to change in before they go to bathe in the river into which the water flows.

A.C.O.R.N. is a series of four 13-week programs which are being prepared for radio broadcast by the Antiochian Archdiocese. The series deal with the basic beliefs of Orthodox. It is now being run on many stations around the country. For more info write: A.C.O.R.N., c/o Fr. John Badeen, 4490 Folsom Dr., Beaumont, TX 77706.

THE PAPER ICON PROJECT is continuing. For more information on this and the Orthodox Study Bible, write to: Phil Tamoush, P.O. Box 1128, Torrance, CA 90505.

EGERMEIER'S BIBLE STORY BOOK, which was much used by children in this country, is now being translated into Russian and will be sent so that some of the 70 million children under the age of 15 in the Soviet Union can also become acquainted with the Biblical stories.

TWO HUNDRED-FIFTY SECULAR PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING SYSTEMS are available in the U.S. These secular systems contain mutually contradictory theories, teachings and techniques. How can one select one from this maze which does not contradict their religious beliefs?

ORTHODOX PASCHAL (EASTER) CARDS are now being published by Hallmark Cards and are available from any of the 22,000 distributors.

A BOOKLET ABOUT THE MOTHER OF GOD is available from Synaxis Press, Box 404, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6J7 Canada for $3. The booklet answers such questions as "On the Title Theotokos or 'Mother of God'" and "The Meaning and Identity of the 'Brothers of Jesus.'"

BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS from the U.S.S.R. have contacted the Congress of Russian-Americans, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW Suite 417, Washington, DC 20036 for individuals who could help them. If you wish to work in this area contact the office by writing or call 202-835-0060.

SOVIET LAW now allows independent newspapers to exist but there is no printing presses to use or buy. It is also impossible to get paper. Many go to the Baltic states to get their papers printed.

AN ORTHODOX EDUCATION RESOURCE INFORMATION booklet is available from the Education Commission, Ukrainian Orthodox League of USA, c/o Dr. Gayle Woloschak, 899 S. Plymouth Ct. #303, Chicago, IL 60605. The booklet contains addresses and phone numbers where Orthodox can obtain educational materials, icons, prayer books, note cards, etc.

SOVIET TV is broadcasting the 26-part animated Bible story series "Superbook" over television. Permission has also been granted to open the first Christian news bureau in Moscow. This bureau will send a color booklet of the life of Christ to any Russian child who writes for one.

SALES OF THE BIBLE, the Koran and the Prophecies of Nostradamus have gone up 25 to 67% since Iraq invaded Kuwait, according to many bookstore chains and publishers.

GIFTS FOR THE CHRISTIANA MEDICAL FOUNDATION IN BUCHAREST can be made by sending checks to the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate, 2522 Grey Tower Rd., Jackson, MI 49201. Make checks payable to "Help for Romania." There has been much TV coverage on the great need in this country for medical help and help for the orphans.

Dabs of Thoughts

We go to the Divine Liturgy to worship God and to receive Holy Communion. One should not be emphasized over the other.

Come, O ye people, and today let us accept the grace of the Fast as a gift from God and as a time for repentance, in which we may find mercy with the Saviour. (Matins, 1st Mon. of Lent)

The prosphora/antidora, which we receive at the end of the Divine Liturgy, has been blessed; therefore, it should be received with the right hand. The hand should be ungloved. The prosphora should be consumed reverently and completely. If it should be dropped it should be picked up immediately.

On every day of the year we commemorate one or more saints. This is usually the day of their death. One of the latest saints to be recognized is St. John of Kronstadt, who has been placed on the calendar on December 20.

The Matins Canon for the First Monday of Lent (Feb. 18) instructs us that "The time for combat is at hand and has already begun: let us all set forth eagerly upon the course of the Fast, offering our virtues (faith, hope and charity or love) as gifts to the Lord."

On the day following many of the Great Holy Days we see the word Synaxis. What does this mean? In Greek, the word means assembly or synod. On this day those saints are remembered who are in some way connected with the event of the Holy Day. For example, on the day after Christmas we see Synaxis of the Mother of God; on the day after Theophany/the Baptism of Christ we see Synaxis of St. John the Baptist; and after the Annunciation we see the Synaxis of Archangel Gabriel. It was traditional in earlier years for all the clergy in a given diocese to gather in one of the larger cities and to concelebrate the Divine Liturgy with the bishop. After the Liturgy, they met for a regional synod or sobor. In this way they had a synaxis or assembly giving added meaning to the word.

O Lord, give me a heart that is never vain but one that is soft enough to feel another's pain.

THE OPEN ARMS OF GOD

by: Raymond J. Mastroberte
Iconographer/Cantor

Jesus was an extraordinary and interesting person of His day. He dared to be different by healing on the Sabbath Day, visiting and dining with Levi (the tax collector) and saving the adulterous woman from stoning. At that time this was considered sinful. These unprecedented actions raised the eyebrows of the religious community which included the Sadducees, Pharisees and Scribes. Despite public opinion, "the One through Whom all things were made" touched the lives of His creatures. Whether during biblical days or the present nuclear age, the outcast of society need the healing touch of God even more than the righteous. "The healthy do not need a doctor," Christ insists, "but sick people do. I have not come to invite the self-righteous to a change of heart, but sinners." (Luke 5:31-32)

The arms of God are always open for those who need His loving embrace. He never refuses or closes His door to any soul no matter how insignificant they may seem in the human eyes.

Christ does not judge us with conventional wisdom but with an eternal scale of justice. "For the measure you measure with will be measured back to you." (Luke 6:38)

"I have sinned more than the harlot," prays Saint Germanus of Constantinople, "have outdone Manasses in iniquity and been more merciless than the rich man." All who approach the Divine Physician with a broken and contrite heart leave healed, whole and at peace.

The Scriptural example of Christ's accessibility teaches us that the Kingdom of Heaven is open to saint and sinner alike and that the Church, the reflection of that Kingdom, should not be afraid to embrace fallen humanity and raise it to the heights of spiritual dignity. The Good Shepherd calls to each of us, "Come to Me, all who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you." (Matthew 11:28)

There is no more deadly state of mind than the one in which we are preoccupied with possessions. Every time you start to compare your house, clothes, car, income, etc. against that of your friends, you can feel your personality twist into deformity. There will always be those who do better than you and those who do not.

MYSTICAL LIFE

Too often in religion the moral life gets all the attention, and so we are in danger of forgetting the crucial importance of the mystical life, which is the life of the heart and much stressed in our Orthodox Church. Quite often the suggestion is made that the mystical life, the life of a unifying communion with God, is available only to the happy few who reach eventually a state of total conscious surrender to God. But the mystical life lies at the beginning of our existence and not just at the end. We are born in intimate communion with God who created us in love. This is confirmed at our baptism. Our heart is that divine gift which allows us to trust not just God, but our families, ourselves, and our world.

Because the heart is the deepest source of the spiritual life, the life of faith, hope and love, human affections do not lead us where our hearts want to lead us. The heart is much wider and deeper than our affections. It is before and beyond the distinctions between sorrow and joy, anger and lust, fear and love, knowledge and understanding. It is the place where all is one in God, the place where we truly belong, the place from which we come and the place to which we always yearn to return.

Has your spiritual life been turned into only a matter of morality, a matter of doing? You must go to the depths of your heart and revive the sense of belonging, of trust in being, the trust that you are in God and that the spirit of God is within you "the kingdom of God is within you."

CHUCKLE

A seventy-five-year-old man went to his doctor for a physical examination. The doctor examined him and couldn't find anything wrong. He said, "It's amazing! You really have the body of a man twenty-five years younger. What is your secret?" The man replied, "Well, when my wife and I were married fifty years ago, we made an agreement. We decided that we would never quarrel. So when we have a difference of opinion and it causes friction, and we can see a fight coming on, she just stays in the house and I go out for a long walk. I guess good health is due to the fact that for fifty years I've pretty much lived an outdoor life."

DOVES

"Every male that openth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord and to offer a sacrifice ... a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." Lev. 12:6-8.

Doves or pigeons occur 12 times in the Bible. There is little or no real distinction between the two words.

After giving birth to a child, a woman was considered to be impure for forty days and in Leviticus, the Jewish Law commands that a one-year-old lamb should be sacrificed for the woman's purification when a male child opens a womb. If the family were poor, the woman could substitute two doves for the lamb. Apparently Mary and Joseph considered themselves to be in this class. Mary probably bought two rock doves from a Temple vendor. Rock doves are one of the most common doves in Palestine and Europe. Mary's birds were probably a pale grey or light brown and not white as depicted in most religious paintings. Since ancient times doves were cultivated in Palestine for meat and Temple sacrifices but white doves, which are albinos and extremely rare in nature, were usually specially bred and quite expensive.

Since doves were used in this important ceremony, it is highly likely that the Magi had not yet visited the Holy Family. If the Magi had arrived, Mary and Joseph could have used some of the gift of gold to purchase a lamb, which was the preferred sacrifice for a descended of King David.

In the New Testament besides being offered by the poor for the redemption of the firstborn as stated earlier (Luke 2:24) by Mary and Joseph on this occasion, which we call the Meeting of the Lord, and celebrate on February 2/15, the dove is mentioned as a visible symbol of the Spirit in the Baptism of Jesus (Mt 3:16). The dove was also sold in the temple courts for sacrificial purposes a practice which Jesus objected to vigorously. (Mt 21:12). It is mentioned as a symbol of innocence. (Mt 10:16).

The imagery of the dove in the Bible is rich and shows familiarity with the bird.

Larry R. Sherman, Ph.D.

STUDY AHEAD

One year because of illness it was impossible for us to participate in the Holy Thursday Service. We decided to read and discuss the selections from th Twelve Readings, which are the main part of the service. We found it spiritually enriching, and since that year have made it a part of our Lenten discipline to read, study and meditate on these readings in the weeks prior to Holy Week. When we hear them read in church, they are so much more meaningful and not just another notch to put in the candle.

We have taken the readings and put them into the order in which they can be found in the Bible. We read two readings each week. May we suggest that you use this suggestion for reading as part of your Lenten discipline?

Matthew 26:57-75
27:3-32
27:33-54
27:62-66
Mark 15:16-32
15:43-47
Luke 23:32-49
John 13:31-18:1
18:1-18
18:28-19:16
19:25-37
19:38-42

PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED

Aside from personal days which we set aside prayer for our departed friends and relatives, the Orthodox Church has set aside certain days on which all Orthodox Christians that have departed "in the hope of resurrection and eternal life" must be commemorated all together. Such days are termed "universal," "ancestral" or "soul" days.

The first of these days comes on Meatfare Saturday, which falls on February 9 this year. You are reminded to give or send a list of names of departed Orthodox relatives and friends to the priest, who will pray for them on this Saturday and on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Saturdays of Great Lent.

The setting of Meatfare Saturday as one of the "Soul" Saturdays dates from the early days of Christianity. Among the prayers we hear on this day is one for all "that from Adam until today have reposed in piety and correct faith,": of every calling and every age; "for all that have drowned, that battle hath mowed down, that earthquake hath swallowed up, that have been slain by murderers, that fire hath consumed, that have been food for the wild beasts, birds and serpents, that have been struck by lightning and have perished in freezing cold, that have fallen by the sword, that the horse hath trampled, the rock struck or the earth covered up, that have been slain by deadly potion or poison, or have choked on bones..." i.e. all that have met untimely deaths and/or have been left without a proper funeral.

The Gospel for this day Luke 21:8-9, 25-27, 33-36 describes the Second Coming of Christ providing us with an excellent opportunity to pray for the faithful departed and to ask God to be merciful to them on the Day of Judgment. We hear more about this Judgment the following day in the Gospel Reading Matt. 21 25:31-46.

TRUST HIM

How lonely, sad, or fearful we sometimes feel when a relationship with another person comes to a seeming end. We may feel as though there is nothing we can do, but there is. We can focus our attention on God. By doing so, we find the comfort we seek. We can remain steadfast in faith, believing that God will see us through all situations. The Bible tells us in Nahum 1:7 that "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; And he Knows those who trust in Him."

We are comforted when we believe that God sees us through every situation. We must have faith in God's love for us, remembering that Divine love can work in and through us in all situations if we let it. We let God do His perfect work when we place ourselves, our loved ones, and all situations in God's care and keeping. His love is active in all events. It will see us through to the dawn of a new and brighter day. Have faith and trust in God to see you through all situations.

•St. Ephraim

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The man did as he was told. Then he returned to the monastery and announced to the monk that he had done penance for his folly.

"Not yet," replied the monk. "Take your bag, make the rounds again and gather up every feather that you have dropped."

"But the wind must have blown them all away," said the man.

"True," said the monk. "Words are easily dropped, but no matter how hard you try, you can never get them back again."

Give me not a spirit of vain babbling!

PRESS FUND

A special thanks — Spasebo — to those who have helped us this month to keep publishing by helping us to meet our rising costs. We appreciate you: Mae Stashkevetch, Archpriest Mark Kosev, Mary Ann Szanny, Joe Holobinko, Alexandra Spanovic, Adelaide Vogt, Mary Kochmaruk, Lillian Kidon, Dorothy S. Burochonock, Mary Kollar, Irene Allen, Mary Lepa, George Kupar, John Trosky, Olga Krasofsky, Helen Kozak, Philip Yurchuk, Helen Trafan, Mary S. Klein, Barbara Simiemsyk, Peter Shakula, George McDonald, Nina S. Doughty, Ann Worobey, Helen Cudlic, Olga Den Heyer, Fr. George Taylor, Elizabeth Berdy, Anon (8), Anna Rishko, Harry and Mary Fryntzko, Anonymous, Metro Horoschak, Fr. John F. Daniels, Mary Lepa, Dimitra Gacis, Catherine Shaffchick, Anna Rosko, Vera Vrabel, Christmas Donation - Julia Blisak. Olga Den Heyer in memory of her parents Michael and Ahafia Dodryanow and sister Vera Ramus. Lillian and Stephen Smarsh in memory of dear parents Conrad and Mary Smarsh, and Jacob and Helen Hrycyna. Eva Durkot in memory of Anthony Durkot and Mary Chacho, Eva Babich in memory of her husband Thomas. Julia Price in memory of her parents Theodore and Peter Baysa. Helen Lesko in memory of her father Anthony Durkot. Walter P. Zachary in memory of his parents Peter and Alexandra and his brother Jon. Julia Bockhaus in memory of Christina Sterzin Astrab and Stephen Astrab. In memory of mother Anna Sulin, who died on Nov. 21. Aunt Anna Glovach for health of Father Basil and Matushka Nina.

•Holy Day

Continued from Page 55

not have any name at that time, it was simply called Forty Days after Nativity.

In many churches, candles are blessed on this day. This may be to honor the "light" which St. Simeon speaks of. Many of our people take one of these Stretenije (Meeting) candles home and light them during thunderstorms, lightning, in sick rooms and at the bedside of dying people. Some of our people also use the word hromnitza, meaning thunder.

Christmas decorations are taken down, and the Christmas plants, decorations, and yule log are burned and the ashes are strewn over the garden and fields in many countries to insure a healthy growth in the coming year.

THE INVITATION

Each year we are invited by the Church to return to the true source of life by fasting, almsgiving and prayer. This invitation is again extended to us several weeks before we are "to attend" on February 18 this year.

Fasting, almsgiving and prayer have an antique ring in the modern world, but they are quite simply means of redirecting our relationships: first, to ourselves, secondly, to others and finally to God. The weeks prior to Lent lead us on the path to Lent step by step. Life flows in us and through us when our relationships are ordered aright.

Fasting is a way of waking up to ourselves by realizing how enslaved we become to our appetites. We are an addicted people. We "give up" in order for us to come alive in a new way.

Almsgiving is a way of re-ordering our relationships to others. It is not only a question of money but also of our time and talents. Lent can be a time to find practical ways of giving ourselves to others - from serving soup at a soup kitchen to sitting quietly with someone who is afraid to be alone.

Prayer is a simple word for the ordering of our relationship to God. It is our response to the command: "Be still and know that I am God." Lent is a wonderful time of stillness and waiting - at the foot of the Cross, the source of our life.

You have received the invitation. Will you accept, ignore or "send regrets"?

WHAT IS FAIR OR UNFAIR?

We live in a world that is constantly concerned with what is fair and what is unfair. It seems, however, that "fairness" seems to take a back seat to our decision-making process when we start dealing with God and the Church. "God is all merciful — He will understand, etc." is all too often the battle cry of those who make excuses for Sunday Church attendance.

We tend to take the Church for granted, don't we? Like so much of the rest of our lives, we want the benefits without paying the cost. Do I insist in the Church bending backwards to pull off a child's wedding although the child rarely attends Church for the Divine Liturgy? Do I go on vacation and expect God to watch over me, while it never occurs to me to stop in at a Church while I'm on vacation?

Remembering to keep the Sabbath day holy means more than just popping in a couple times a year. It has to do with observing the first two commandments as well: Not putting anything before God, nor building anything to worship in God's place.

Certainly things "come up" which make going to Church on Sunday sometimes difficult or impossible, and in the best sense of the phrase, "God is all merciful — He will understand." But what's fair is fair! God cares for us all the time. Is worshipping Him one hour on one day of the week too much to ask in return? How do you remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy?

ALASKA FUND

Helping to send copies to the missioners in Alaska are: Mary S. Klein, Olga Krasofsky, Mary Ann Szanny, J.M. Syka, Eva Babich, Mary Kollar, Alexis M. Fedec, Metro Horoschak, Vera Vrabel, George Kupar, Peter Shakula, Boris Gontcharenko, Velma Bova, Olga Den Heyer, Ann Worobey, Anon (3), Nina S. Doughty. In memory of George Tarasovich, Jr.

•Lenten Journey

Continued from Page 55

p.m. on Sunday following the Vesper of Forgiveness.

Like a trip to the woods or desert, Lent can be frightening. Even though the Church has taken us step by step in preparation, we fear that we will miss our familiar comforts. We get restless at the thought of being without so much TV or other entertainment. We dislike the thought of being a bit hungry and eating unfamiliar foods on fast days. And the thought of six long weeks can get us down even before we begin.

Most of all we are frightened. We have already been given sobering lessons. What new information or insight will we gain which might shake us up? What will our journey show us?

There is no guarantee, of course, that by getting involved in Lent we will enjoy Easter more. But chances are that by making the journey He will satisfy our hunger and thirst with His very own undying ever-radiant, ever-transforming Presence. PRAY: "God our Father, Lord of tenderness and compassion, we long with all our hearts to return to you. In your gracious goodness, hear the desire of our hearts and bless us as we enter this holy time of Lent. We place ourselves, our lives and all that we are in Your hands. Keep us in your care and lead us to the light of Holy Pascha/Easter. Amen."



Do you wear an apron? It is surprising how many women do not wear them any longer. I remember when company came on Sunday, or when women went to a church dinner, they carried a neatly folded apron in case they were needed to help prepare the dinner or to do the dishes. To be in one's own kitchen without an apron was considered improper or a slur on the woman's housewife abilities. A housewife always kept a clean apron hanging on a kitchen hook to put on when she answered the door. In fact, looking back now, there were some women from my youth whom I cannot picture without an apron on. It is now hard to find those encompassing everyday aprons. I unsuccessfully looked for one to do my Hanya skit. I had to make do with a "half apron."

In reading Russian cookbooks we find that the same few vegetables are used over and over again. But as a child I remember eating turnips and rutabagas and a great variety of root vegetables. Here is a recipe using rutabagas making a pudding, which we often had with chicken instead of mashed potatoes. I like to make it for a light lunch or to use as a side dish. Rutabagas are also known as swedes or winter or yellow turnips. They have a sweeter taste and are less watery than white turnips.

Rutabaga Pudding

¼ cup fine bread crumbs
¼ cup milk
2 eggs
4 cups cooked mashed rutabagas
⅛ tsp. nutmeg
2 teas. honey, molasses or sugar
1 Tbls. butter (about)
pepper, salt to taste

The rutabagas are peeled and mashed like potatoes. Soak the bread crumbs in the milk for a few minutes. Beat in the eggs with a fork. Add the rutabagas, salt, pepper, honey, and nutmeg. Mix well. Pour into buttered casserole. Dot with butter. Bake uncovered for about 1 hour in a 350° oven. The pudding should be set and lightly browned. Check after 45 minutes because timing depends on the size casserole you use.



FEBRUARY 1991

1. 1 John 2:7-17
2. 2 Tim 3:1-9
3. 1 Cor 6:12-20 - Sunday
4. 1 John 2:18-3:10
5. 1 John 3:11-20
6. 1 John 3:21-4:6
7. 1 Cor 12:7-11
8. 2 John 1:1-13
9. 1 Cor 10:23-28
10. 1 Cor 8:8-9:2 - Sunday
11. 3 John 1:1-15
12. Jude 1:1-10
13. Joel 2:12-26
14. Jude 1:11-25
15. Zech 8:7-17
16. Rom 14:19-23; 16:25-27
17. Rom 13:11-14:4 - Sunday
18. Isa 1:1-20
19. Gal 5:22-26; 6:1-2
20. Isa 2:3-11
21. Isa 2:11-21
22. Isa 3:1-14
23. Heb 1:1-12
24. Heb 11:24-26, 32-12:2 - Sunday
25. Isa 4:2-6, 5:1-7
26. Isa 5:7-16
27. Isa 5:16-25
28. Isa 6:1-12

Pascal Lent begins 18 February.

BIBLE STUDY

You will notice that the Bible readings for Great Lent, which starts on February 18, are taken from the Old Testament for weekday readings and from the New Testament for weekend readings. The reason for this is that during Great Lent the Divine Liturgies at which the gifts are consecrated are not served during the week but on weekends only. During the week on Wednesdays and Fridays, the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified is served, which means that the gifts are used which were consecrated on the previous Sunday. On Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, the Typica or Pro-liturgy is served at which there is no consecration or communion.

During Great Lent the readings are from Isaiah during the 6th hour and the Proverbs and Genesis at Vespers. If we study the readings, which follow in order, they do not skip around as do the readings from the New Testament during the rest of the year, we will find that they are instructive. They were chosen as beneficial readings for the cathechumens, who were preparing for Baptism on Great Saturday. The readings must have been familiar to most of the cathechumens as they belong to the traditional divisions of the Hebrew Bible: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings.

The Book of Isaiah, from which we have chosen the readings this year, point toward the person and saving grace of Christ as the Messiah. The Genesis readings show the early phases of God's plan for man and how he can be saved even after he has sinned. The Proverbs are a guide for living according to God's laws. They were said to be written by Solomon. It is interesting that in his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul used this as a guide. Corinth was a city known for its wealth and luxury, for the immoral living of its inhabitants. How could this be wrong "if everyone was doing it?" He gave them advice in Corinthians 6:9, 10. The advice using Proverbs as his guide is as relevant today as it was then. We in this age of "new morality" need this warning as did the people of Corinth who felt they were too sophisticated to follow the laws of God.

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